

HOOSIER FOLKLORE BULLETIN

Edited by

Herbert Halpert

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Bloomington, Indiana

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FOLK BELIEFS AND PRACTICES FROM SOUTHERN INDIANA

During the summer of 1938 I was engaged in collecting all forms of folklore in the southern part of Indiana, aided by a grant from Indiana University. The material presented here is an incidental part of the folklore recovered at that time. It comes principally from Gibson, Pike, Warrick, and Posey Counties; the remainder is from Crawford, Perry, Spencer, Dubois, Vanderburg, and Daviess. Much of it is common to the entire area, and many informants gave the same item in much the same way.

I. Weather, Planting Signs, and Moon Phases

1. If it rains on the first day of the month, it will rain fifteen days in that month.
2. The first twelve days of January rule the weather for the rest of the year.
3. The number of stars inside a ring around the moon indicates the number of days before a rain.
4. "Rainbow at morning,
Sailors take warning;
Rainbow at night,
Sailors delight."
5. "Evening red and morning gray
Send the traveler on his way;
Evening gray and morning red
Bring down rain upon head."
6. "If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,
Winter will take another flight;
If Candlemas Day be sad and drear,
Winter is gone and spring is here."
7. "April wet or April dry
Always brings a head of rye."
8. Friday will be either the fairest or the foulest.*

*This saying is at least as early as the time of Chaucer. Cf. his "Selde is the Friday al the wowke ylike" (Knight's Tale, line 1539).

9. "On the 17th of July
Plant your turnips, wet or dry."
10. If it rains while the sun is shining, it will rain at the same hour
next day.
11. If it rains on Easter Sunday, there will be rain for seven consecutive
Sundays.
12. When leaves turn wrongside out, rain will soon follow.
13. "Rooster crowing going to bed,
He'll get up with a wet head."
14. "Wind in the south has rain in its mouth;
Wind in the east is good for neither man nor beast."
15. "A bushel a day is the price that you pay
For planting corn after the middle of May."
16. "A swarm of bees in May is worth a stack of hay;
A swarm of bees in June is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July ain't worth a cowfly."
17. "Mackerel scales and mares' tails
Make lofty ships carry low sails."
18. If March comes in "like a lion," it will go out "like a lamb" (and vice versa).
19. If there is a heavy dew in the morning, there will be no rain that day.
20. If it rains on Monday, there will be rain on three days of that week.
21. If the sun goes down behind a cloud on Friday night, it will rain be-
fore Monday.
22. For every fog in January there will be a frost in May.
23. If the groundhog sees his shadow on February 2, there will be six weeks
more of winter.
24. Potatoes should be planted on March 17 if the dark of the moon falls
on that date.
25. When planting shade trees, place three ears of corn in each hole and
you will never lose a tree.
26. A large crop of cucumbers will be grown if a man straddles the hills
when the seeds are planted.
27. The time to plant corn is when the maple leaves are as big as a guinea's
foot.

28. Cucumbers should be planted in the sign of the twins.
29. Children and young stock should be weaned when the sign is in the feet.
30. Flower seed should be planted on the first day of May to ensure a good crop.
31. One should eat cabbage on New Year's Day in order to ensure having money throughout the year.
32. Anything that bears fruit above the ground should be planted in the light of the moon; anything that bears in the ground should be planted in the dark of the moon.
33. Pepper can be grown most successfully by a hot-tempered person.
34. If one cleans out fence rows when the sign is in the heart (August), the sapling roots will never grow again.
35. Eggs will not hatch when the wind is blowing from the northwest.
36. Lettuce, radishes, and sweet peas should be planted on St. Valentine's Day.
37. If butchering is done in the dark of the moon, the meat will be more tender.
38. Cabbage should be sowed when the sign is in the head.
39. Good Friday is the time for planting any crops that bear in the ground.
40. Soap should be made in the light of the moon so that it won't boil over.
41. If a hen is set when the wind is from the north, the eggs will hatch but the chickens will stand around and "peep" until the wind changes.
42. An abundance of nuts is a sign of a hard winter.
43. Unusually thick corn husks portend a hard winter.
44. If squirrels store lots of nuts, there will be an extremely cold winter.
45. An abundance of foliage portends a hard winter.
46. If one moves into a house in the light of the moon, he will prosper. If, however, he moves into it in the dark of the moon, everything will go wrong.
47. If the moon changes in the morning, there will be rain in a very short time.

48. Fields should be manured in the dark of the moon. If a field is manured in the light of the moon, the manure will stay on top of the ground.
49. Children are born either the day before, the day of, or the day after, the changing of the moon.
50. A severe winter is a sign of a good crop year.*
51. Thunder in the north is a sign of dry weather.
52. Thunder will prevent duck eggs from hatching unless they are lying on the ground.
53. To ensure raising a good crop of watermelons, one should get up before sunrise on the first of May, go to the field backward and without any clothes on, and plant the seed.
54. Lots of nuts in the fall is a sign of much high water in the winter and spring.

II. Luck Signs

55. It is bad luck to put on the left shoe before the right.
56. It brings bad luck to a child to cut its hair before it is a year old.
57. It is bad luck for any near relative to help prepare a corpse for burial.
58. It is bad luck to comb the hair just before retiring.
59. It is bad luck to watch a departing guest out of sight.
60. It is bad luck to step over a broom.
61. It is bad luck to dress one foot entirely before beginning to dress the other.
62. It is bad luck to leave a house by a different door from that by which one entered.
63. It is bad luck to light three cigarettes from one match.
64. It is bad luck to walk under a ladder.
65. It is bad luck to return to the house before having reached one's destination. The bad luck can be averted by sitting down for a few seconds before setting out again.
66. It is bad luck to see a new moon through branches or over the left shoulder.

*This saying is probably based upon the fact that a severe winter kills off many harmful insects.

67. It is bad luck to begin a journey on Friday.
68. It is bad luck to sweep after dark.
69. It is bad luck to kill a spider.
70. It is bad luck to kill a cat.
71. It is bad luck to kill a cricket.
72. It is bad luck for thirteen people to sit at table together.
73. It is bad luck to turn a chair around on one leg.
74. It is bad luck to cut out a dress on Friday if it cannot be completed the same day.
75. It is bad luck to raise an umbrella indoors.
76. It is bad luck to sing at the table.
77. It is bad luck to spill salt. If one spills some, he should throw a pinch of it over the left shoulder.
78. It is bad luck to rock an empty chair.
79. It is bad luck to burn sassafras.
80. Carrying a hoe or other outdoor implement through the house will bring bad luck.
81. Finding a five-leaf clover brings bad luck unless the clover is thrown over the left shoulder.
82. It is unlucky to have peacock feathers in the house.
83. It is bad luck to put on socks wrongside out. If one does so, he should take them off and count ten (i.e. "count the bad luck out") before turning and replacing them.
84. If stockings or socks are put on wrongside out, they should be left so until the following morning. To turn them will bring bad luck.
85. It is bad luck for two persons walking together to be divided by a tree or other obstacle. When this happens, one should say "bread", and the other "butter". This will avert the bad luck.
86. It brings bad luck to return to the house before having reached one's destination. If one must return, he should take some money from pocket or purse, lay it on the table, then pick it up and return it to pocket or to purse before setting out again.
87. It is good luck to find a four-leaf clover.
88. It is good luck to find a horseshoe.

89. It is lucky to see the new moon over the right shoulder.
90. It is lucky to have money in your pocket when you first see the new moon.
91. The finding of a pin, point toward the finder, portends "sharp" (good) luck. If the head of the pin is toward the finder, bad luck will follow.
92. To see a gray horse is a sign of good luck.
93. For a stray cat to come to the house is a sign of good luck. This is especially true if the cat is black.
94. It brings good luck to count each white horse seen. "Stamp" each by licking the right thumb, pressing it to the left palm, and then striking the left palm with the right fist.
95. It is good luck for a butterfly to light on one (particularly if it lights on the head).
96. Charm strings (heavy strings strung with colored glass buttons or other ornaments) bring good luck. If the ornaments are gifts or if they have some sort of history, they are more efficacious.
97. For good luck, carry around the ankle or around the waist a string with a coin on it.
98. To ensure good luck for the year, one should mount a mule backward with a bag of salt in one hand and a bag of eggs in the other, and ride to his destination. If he arrives without mishap, he will have good luck for the entire year.

III. Other Signs

99. If one breaks a needle while sewing a garment, she will die before the garment is worn out.
100. Spilling salt is a sign that one will be involved in a quarrel. The quarrel can be averted by burning a pinch of the salt on the stove.
101. If a dishrag falls in a "wad", it is a sign that someone dirtier is coming.
102. If two in a family die within a short time of each other, a third will die within the year.
103. If one's shoe comes untied, it is a sign that someone is thinking of him or her. If the person is named correctly, the shoe will not come untied again.
104. Rain on the day of a burial betokens eternal happiness for the deceased.
105. "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on;
Blessed are the dead that the rain falls on."

106. To dream of washing white clothes is a sign of approaching illness or other trouble.
107. If a measuring worm crawls on a person, it is a sign that that lucky person is to get a new suit or new dress. The color will be determined by that of the worm, whose color is different at different periods of its life.
108. When a person drops a bit of food while eating, it is a sign that someone at the table grudged it to him.
109. When one feels a momentary chill, it is a sign that some person or animal is walking over the spot where his grave will be.
110. A person with extremely hairy legs and arms will be very successful in raising hogs.
111. An itching nose is a sign of callers.
112. An itching nose is a sign that the owner will be kissed by a fool.
113. The appearing of a white dog suddenly at night is a sign of an approaching death.
114. If one meets a white horse, it is a sign that he is soon to meet a red-headed lady.
115. "A whistling girl and a crowing hen
Alike will come to some bad end."
116. "Find a pin and pick it up, all the day you'll have good
luck;
Find a pin and let it lie, you shall want before you die."
117. "Change the name and not the letter,
Change for worse and not for better."
118. Burning ears mean that someone is talking about you. If it is the left ear, the comments are uncomplimentary; if the right, complimentary.
119. When a star falls, it is a sign that someone has just died.
120. An itching palm denotes that one is to receive money.
121. If, when one sees the new moon for the first time, he has money in his pocket, he will have money all that month.
122. If there are bubbles floating on one's coffee and he can dip them up with a spoon before they disappear, he will receive some money.
123. If one goes into a house through one door and leaves it through another, it is a sign that other company will follow.

124. If the rooster crows on the doorstep, company is coming.
125. Dropping a fork is a sign that a woman is coming to the house.
126. Dropping a knife is a sign that a man is coming to the house.
127. If two knives (forks, spoons) are placed by a plate, it is a sign that someone hungry is coming.
128. White spots on the nails denote lies told.
129. Sores on the tongue denote lies told.
130. If the first person to enter a house on New Year's Day is a man, the owner will be rich; if a woman is the first to enter, he will be poor.
131. If two persons wash their hands together in the same basin, they will quarrel.
132. If two persons bump heads accidentally, they will sleep together that night.
133. A "run" in a stocking is a sign that the wearer will receive a letter soon.
134. Two persons who, while working, strike each other's implements accidentally will work together the following year.
135. To dream of muddy water is a sign of coming trouble.
136. The howling of a dog during a sickness in the home is a sure sign of death.
137. Sneezing at the breakfast table is a sign that there will be a death in the family within a week.
138. A ticking in the wall (called the "death watch") is a sign of approaching death in the family.
139. The screeching or hooting of an owl is a sign of approaching death.
140. A picture falling from the wall means a death in the family soon.
141. A bird flying, or attempting to fly, into the house is a token of death.

IV. Wishes and Divination

142. To learn future husband or wife, count each white horse seen. After a hundred have been counted, the first person met will be the future mate.

143. To learn future husband or wife, go into a clover field and find a vine of yellow dodder. Throw it over the left shoulder and it will form the initials of the future mate.
144. To determine future mate, cut letters of the alphabet from paper, put them into a saucer of water, and set the saucer under the bed. In the morning the initials of the future partner will be turned up.
145. If one will count nine stars for nine consecutive nights, he will dream on the ninth night of the one he will marry.
146. If, when the first dove in the spring is heard, a girl or boy will take one step forward with the right foot, a hair the color of the future mate's will be found under it when it is lifted.
147. To determine the strength of another's attachment, take a branch of "Live Forever," name it for the person, and put it away in the house somewhere. If the plant lives, the person for whom it was named loves the one who hid it.
148. "New moon, true moon,
 Tell me where my true love lies;
 If a bird chirp, near at hand;
 If a cow low, far away;
 If a coffin knock, dead."
149. Until a few years ago it was customary, when a quilt had been finished, for all the girls present to take hold of the sides and ends of the completed quilt, put a cat into the center of it, and toss it up and down. The girl toward whom the cat jumped or ran would be the first of the group to marry.*
150. If one turns a ring on a finger three times and makes a wish, the wish will come true.
151. If the hem of the dress turn up, the wearer should kiss it and make a wish, as the wish will invariably come true.
152. If one makes a wish while looking at the new moon over the right shoulder, it will come true.
153. When the wishbone of a chicken or other fowl is broken by two persons, each of whom pulls at one part, the one holding the longer part after it has broken will be the first to marry. If this piece be placed over the doorway, the first person of the opposite sex to pass under it will be the future bride or groom, as the case may be.
154. If one puts a four-leaf clover in his shoe, the first girl with whom he crosses running water will be his wife.
155. The first dream dreamed under a new coverlet (or in a strange house) will come true.

*Cf. the saying "There's no telling which way a cat will jump".

156. To find a lost article, spit in the palm of the hand and strike the spittle with the index finger. The spittle will fly in the direction of the missing article.
157. When one sees a white horse or a white mule, a wish made will come true if he will moisten the thumb of the right hand, press it to the palm of the left, and then strike the palm with his clenched fist.
158. When one is sleeping in a strange room, he can learn the name of his future wife by naming each corner of the room for some girl, then noting toward which corner his gaze is directed when he awakes in the morning. The girl for whom he named that corner will be his wife.
159. If one has lost money and knows the place where he lost it, he can find it by dropping another coin, which will roll to the lost money.
160. The profession of the future husband, the dress of the wife, and the kind of home in which the couple will live are learned by the counting of the buttons on the wearer's coat or dress, the word on which the counting ends being the answer in each instance.

"Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief,
 Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief"
 (or "Doctor, lawyer, Indian chief")

"Silk, satin, calico, rags"

"Big house, little house, pig-pen, barn"*

161. Making a wish on an eyelash: Find a loose eyelash and place it on the tip of the index finger. Press this finger to the thumb of a companion so that the eyelash is between finger and thumb. Each then makes a wish. The finger and the thumb are then drawn apart, and the person to whose digit the eyelash adheres will have his wish granted.
162. When two persons say the same thing simultaneously, they should join right hands so that the little fingers are linked together and the thumbs touching, and then wish. One says "needles;" the other, "pins" — then "roosters" and "hens." The first then asks "What comes out of the chimney?" and the other replies "smoke." The wish will come true.

Sometimes the dialogue runs as follows:

"Needles"

"Roosters"

"When a man marries"

"First thing he buys"

"pins"

"hens"

"his trouble begins"

"is safety pins"

or

*Practically identical lines are used by English children in the game of battledore and shuttlecock. See Gomme, Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland (London, 1894-8) II, 192 ff.

"Needles"
 "roosters"
 "Roosevelt"

"pins"
 "hens"
 "Hoover"

(Names of any former presidents or other prominent persons
 may be used)

163. To learn the future husband, boil an egg hard, take out the yolk, and fill the space with salt, then eat it just before retiring. Drink no water until morning. The form of the future husband will appear (in a dream) carrying water to the sleeper. If the water is in a glass, the couple will be wealthy; if in a tin cup, poor; if in a gourd, very poor.
164. To learn the future husband, spread a handkerchief on the grass on the night of April 30, then on May morning go out before sunrise and you will find that the dew has formed the initials of the future mate on the handkerchief.
165. Any time that the sun is shining on the first day of May, take a mirror, go to the well, and hold the mirror over it so that it will reflect the water. The reflection of the future husband's face will appear in the mirror. If the holder is to die soon, the mirror will reflect a coffin.
166. If, when the first whippoorwill is heard in the spring, a girl will take off her right shoe and look in the heel of the stocking, she will find there a hair the color the future husband's.
167. To learn the future husband, string buttons given by friends. The person giving the hundredth button will be the husband.
168. An apple peeling swung three times around the head and then dropped behind the back will form the initial of the future husband (or wife).
169. Sometimes a girl has a friend name an apple for a boy of her acquaintance, and then counts the apple seeds as follows:

"One, I love; two, I love; three, I love (they say);
 Four, I love with all my heart; five, I cast away;
 Six, he loves; seven, she loves, eight, both love;
 Nine, he comes; ten, he tarries;
 Eleven, he courts; twelve, he marries;
 Thirteen, honor; fourteen, riches;
 Fifteen, the lady wears the britches."
170. "Star light, star bright,
 First star I've seen tonight,
 I wish I may, I wish I might
 Have the wish I wish tonight."
171. To learn the future husband, just before midnight open all the doors, and, doing everything backward (walking, etc.), set the table, setting twice as many places as there are girls present. All must be done in absolute silence. When the table has been

set, the girls should take their places. At the stroke of twelve, a hard wind will begin to blow, cats will begin to squall, and the future husbands will enter.

V. Witchcraft*

- 172. If the butter fails to "come", put a horseshoe in the churn, as the butter is bewitched. The witch can be recognized by the mark of the horseshoe on her body.
- 173. A witch can be killed only by a silver bullet.
- 174. To make butter "come", heat a poker and stick it in the churn. This will counteract any witchcraft present,

VI. Miscellaneous

- 175. The seventh son of a seventh son has the power to foretell events.
- 176. Duck feathers in a tick will cause a dying person to die hard.
- 177. If one trims his nails on Friday, he will never have the toothache.
- 178. If one goes to bed laughing, he will get up crying in the morning.
- 179. Sap from the grapevine will cause the hair to grow.
- 180. Styes are caused from urinating in the highway.
- 181. Cats will mutilate a corpse.
- 182. Cats will suck the breath of a sleeping person.
- 183. Sleeping with the head toward the south causes laziness.
- 184. Stepping over a child will stop his growth.
- 185. Tickling a baby will cause him to become a stutterer.
- 186. If one places a piece of wedding-cake under his pillow, his dream will come true.
- 187. A child born with a "veil" (caul) is psychic.
- 188. Lightning never strikes twice in the same place.

*Out of all the hundreds of beliefs and practices collected, these three are the only ones pertaining to witchcraft.

189. If one takes the last slice of bread on a plate, he will never marry.
190. Sleeping in the moonlight will cause one to become insane.
191. To sweep under the bed on which a very ill person is lying will cause his death.
192. When given seeds or cuttings for planting, one should never thank the giver. If he does, the plants will not grow.
193. If one sweeps under a chair in which a person is sitting, the sitter will never be married.
194. If a child's nails are cut before he is a year old, he will be cross-eyed.
195. If one cuts his nails on Sunday, the devil will get him.
196. The seventh son of a family is a natural healer.
197. If there is a double wedding, one couple will prosper but the other will not.
198. Contagious diseases are more likely to spread from boys to girls and vice versa than from either to members of the same sex.
199. Fish will bite more readily if the fisherman will spit on his hook.
200. For every time one counts his warts he will get a new one.
201. Playing with toads causes warts.
202. Killing a toad will cause the cows to give bloody milk.
203. One should never begin at the stem end to peel a cucumber or he will draw the bitter taste of the stem all through it.
204. A show of excessive grief on the part of relatives or friends will cause a dying person to suffer a lingering death.
205. If one neglects to bring cucumbers in from the garden early in the morning, he should take an umbrella with him to shade them from the sun.
206. "Chamber lye" (urine) used as an ingredient in dye will cause the material dyed to hold its color.
207. Laying a hat on a bed (particularly if the crown be down) will bring illness to the wearer.
208. To drop a comb while combing the hair is a sign of a coming disappointment.

209. The dropping of a spoon means a disappointment.
210. When a death occurs, all the clocks in the house should be stopped.
211. When a death occurs, veils should be placed over all the mirrors.
212. A silver coin put into the dough will cause the bread to rise.
213. A turtle will not loose its hold until it hears thunder.
214. If a girl sits on a dining table, she will not marry for seven years.
215. A dog can be kept at home by burying under the doorstep a few hairs from his tail.
216. A setting of eggs should always be an uneven number.
217. When removing to another house, one should never take the broom or the cat.
218. The killing of a snake and turning of it bellysides up will bring rain.
219. Cats draw lightning, and one should not handle cats during a storm.
220. If one turns over a chair, he will not be married that year.
221. If a bird uses the trimmings of human hair in building its nest, the person from whose head the hair came will be a sufferer from headaches.
222. Hairs from a horse's tail will turn to snakes if kept in rainwater.
223. One should knock on wood immediately after making any sort of boast.
224. If a snake is killed, its tail will not die until sundown.
225. Round eggs produce hens; long eggs produce roosters.
226. If a relative helps in any way with the preparing of a body for burial, there will be another death in the family within the year.
227. If one repairs a dress or sews a button on it while wearing it, someone will tell lies on her — a lie for each stitch taken.
228. A woman will never "amount to anything" until her wedding dress is worn out.
229. The point of an open safety-pin found will indicate the direction of a sweetheart.
230. If hoot owls bother at night, the turning of the left shoe bottomsides up will cause them to leave.
231. To use crutches in sport or to imitate someone with a limp or deformity renders one likely to need crutches or to have the same lameness or

deformity as the person mocked.*

232. "Where spiders grow
No beaux ever go."
233. A child should be taken up (i.e. upstairs or to some other high place) soon after birth so that he will "rise in the world".
234. To locate the body of a drowned person, take a sheet from his bed and lay it on the water. It will go to the spot where the body is, and sink.
235. If the shirt of a drowned person is thrown into the water at the spot where he sank, it will float until it is directly over the submerged body, when it will remain stationary.
236. A bride should wear

"Something old, something new,
Something borrowed, something blue."
237. On New Year's Day something should be carried into the house before anything is carried out. Some persons even "plant" a piece of money or other object outside beforehand so that it will be ready,
238. The giving of a knife or other sharp instrument will sever the friendship between donor and recipient. Any bad effect can, however, be prevented by the latter's giving a penny or other small coin in exchange.
239. If a dog that bites a person goes mad later, so will the person bitten.
240. If one will cut one inch off a calf's tail the first year (in the spring), two inches the second, and three inches the third, the calf will live to twenty-five years old and will never be sick.
241. A disease contracted from a Negro will be more severe on the patient than will a disease contracted from a white person.
242. If one sweeps after, dark, she will sweep away all her wealth.
243. A "feather crown" (a circlet of feathers formed sometimes in the pillow of a deathbed) is a sign that the sick person will not recover.**
244. A "feather crown" is a sign that the deceased has entered eternal rest.

*Cf. the proverbial "It's ill halting before a cripple."

**Miss Louise Husband, librarian of the Workingmen's Institute Library of New Harmony, Posey County, writes me: "Two women brought

245. If a black cat crosses a person's path, the latter should walk backward ten steps.
246. "Dream of the dead, hear from the living."
247. If, while milking, one lets the milk drop on the stable floor or on the ground, the cow will go dry.
248. "Find a hairpin, find a friend."
249. "Mole on the neck,
Money by the peck."
250. If a card player who is having bad luck will walk around his chair (or the table) and return to the game, his luck will change.

Bloomington, Indiana

Paul G. Brewster

(This collection, supplemented by a brief one that Mr. Brewster published in Folk-Lore and by a group of folk cures which appeared in Southern Folklore Quarterly, gives us a full sampling of the folk beliefs obtainable almost anywhere in Indiana as well as over the whole United States. We hope some of our readers will be stimulated into making collections in their own areas. In making such local collections the collector should try to use the exact words of his informant rather than make a generalized statement; it is more vivid if one gives the actual incident related. Such collections might be made from school classes or from older individuals. It is of value to know which age group has certain beliefs and from what source they are learned, so include as much of that data as possible with each item. If you can get an older person to give you many of these items, give a sketch of that person. Tell what he or she says of the material, and give your impression of the extent to which he believes in it no matter what he says. A word of caution! Be particularly careful not to hurt any informant's feelings either by laughing at these beliefs, or by calling them "superstitions" and saying brusquely that they are not true. We may or may not know what truth is — but it is always interesting to learn what people believe. — The Editor.)

me 'death crowns' or 'tokens' that they had found in the pillows after a death in the family. They thought they were made by some supernatural power, and were very indignant when I said that I had never heard of them and thought they were made by perspiration from the head, that constant turning and burrowing had formed the feathers into mats." The "death crowns" were presented to the Museum by the women, but Miss Husband refused to accept them.

THE DEVIL AND THE FIDDLE

The Devil is a sociable fellow with a weakness for music and musicians. It is almost universally agreed that he is an expert at playing musical instruments. The violin and flute are his two favorites, but the banjo and guitar are more recently coming into liking with him. These are, of course, in addition to his general penchant for "Wine, Woman, and Song". The only contradictory testimony on his expertness that I can recall is from an Aberdeen witch trial. A girl was accused of being present "at a Sabbath on All-hallow Eve...and because the Devil played not so melodiously and well as thou creit (!) thou took his instrument out of his mouth...and played thyself thereon..." (H. B. Gaul, "Music and Devil-Worship," Musical Quarterly, XI (1925), p. 193.)

The sinfulness of secular music, and of fiddling in particular, impressed itself deeply on frontier America. The religious of many sects long opposed dancing to fiddle music, and thus forwarded the development of that very American institution: the play-party. According to one authority this attitude still persists with the colored people. "Playing the fiddle or banjo is thought to be a special accomplishment of the devil and such instruments are tabooed to good church folk..." (N. N. Puckett, Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro (Chapel Hill, 1926), p. 553.)

In an attempt to learn whether trained musicians knew any of the folklore associated with the violin, I interviewed Dean B. Winifred Merrill, formerly Dean of the Music School at Indiana University, on June 19, 1942. Dean Merrill gave an interesting account of the popular attitude toward the violin as he knew it from his own early experience. He also gave me versions of three of the legends that have clung to two well-known Italian violinists and composers: Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840), and Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770). Although Dean Merrill thinks he may have gotten two of them from books, it seems likely to me that these books merely incorporated popular story. Since most of the sober encyclopedias and books about musicians pass over such legendary material with scant comment, it seems worth while to give them here as an indication of how folklore creeps in even in circles that tend to scorn popular taste, and also to show the relation of these tales to the folk tradition.

* * * * *

"I grew up in Chicago and Aurora. And one of the earliest things I can remember about my fiddle, that my old uncle told me 'the Devil was in the fiddle.' He was my guardian and he wouldn't let me take lessons.

"When I was eighteen, I had two students: one was a Presbyterian minister and one was a Congregationalist. The Congregationalist minister told me that in his ministerial life it so shocked some of his parishoners that he played the violin that he was obliged to play it to himself, and he urged me not to let it be known that he was taking lessons; and the Presbyterian minister said the same thing. One of them said, "Not that

there's anything wrong in playing the fiddle, but you know how people will talk." And for a girl to play the fiddle! She was on the way to perdition.

"Of course they said a boy was a sissy if he played the piano, but that didn't have the superstition the violin did. Some Sunday schools wouldn't think of having fiddles and trombones.

"Paganini wrote an air for variations (Air for G String) based on an air, "O Thou Whose Power Tremendous", from Handel's oratorio Moses in Egypt. Violinists in my day would play that often, and they'd leave off all the strings but the 'G', and put that over the middle of the bridge and the nut so it would be just in the middle of the fingerboard. I've heard it often in Chicago in the latter '70's and '80's."

1. Playing On One String

"The story about that goes -- but it isn't true -- was that he, Paganini, was in prison for murder. He was allowed his violin. While in prison his strings broke one by one till nothing was left but the 'G'-- so he played on that and composed his 'Air for G String.' -- Couldn't be true since the 'G' string has been a wound string, and all the strings break before the 'D'. I got that from some book when I was a small boy -- about the time my uncle told me the Devil was in my fiddle."

This is the best known of the Paganini stories. It is given in much the same form in Paul Stoeving, The Story of the Violin (The Music Story Series, London and New York, n.d.) p. 207, note 1. Baltzell's Dictionary of Musicians (Boston, 1917) says that from 1801-04 Paganini "did not appear in public, and to this period refer the false stories of his imprisonment, of his charming of jailer by playing on one string, and of his league with the devil."

According to J. Olcott Sanders, the feat of playing on one string is also ascribed to Ole Bull who broke in succession the "E", "G", and "D" strings, continuing to play beautifully on the remainder of the strings as he broke each, and finally played on the "A" alone. Ole Bull (1810-80) was a Norwegian violin virtuoso who five times toured the United States playing chiefly Scandinavian melodies. Grove's Dictionary says "His success and popularity in the States were unbounded." From Dean Merrill's description it will be seen that what probably started as a Paganini legend, became an accepted concert violinists' tour de force.

Mr. Sanders also refers to an even more remarkable story about Paganini who "is said to have broken all four strings and made new ones out of straw." This takes us into the realm of the fiddler and magic, but that large subject would swell this article beyond reasonable proportions, so I have decided, rigorously, to exclude it. Mr. Sanders' entire article is a fascinating discussion of the place of the fiddler in frontier social life, and reading of it is very heartily recommended. (J. O. Sanders, "Honor the Fiddler!", Texas Folk-Lore Society Publications, XVII (1941), p. 80.)

2. The Devil Guides Paganini

"Cramer, quite a great pianist -- The Cramer Studies -- he heard Paganini play one of his own compositions in which the 'G' string was tuned to 'F', and having absolute pitch, he heard what he knew was an impossibility -- the violin, that only went as low as 'G', playing 'F'. And as he looked, he saw the Devil guiding his bow arm.

" -- I don't know where I read that. I read that long ago. Of course Paganini, to a violinist, he was almost a superhuman being because his music is so difficult technically; and considering how the bow was made in those days, one can hardly see how he did the things he did."

Grove's Dictionary mentions the rumor that Paganini was in league with the devil. In Waldo Selden Pratt's The New Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians (New York, 1935) is much the same explanation of the cause of this belief as Dean Merrill's. "His marvellous feats of dexterity, his use of unusual tunings of the strings, his novel experiments with harmonics and pizzicato effects, his daring whimsicalities and his rather bizarre appearance -- all these tended to create an uncanny impression, so that he was often alleged to be in league with the Evil One." It might be well to note here that even today folk violinists in the South are very fond of using unusual fiddle tunings.

Paganini "was thought by even sane-minded people to have been taught to play be the Devil." (H. D. McKinney and W. R. Anderson, Music In History (New York, 1940) pp. 580-81). Since fiddlers notoriously are of the devil's brood, it is not surprising that he associates with them. In New Hampshire "Old Baker" Moore, the village fiddler, to his dying day believed that he had twice been honored with a personal interview with the Devil." (M. P. Gore and G. E. Speare, New Hampshire Folk Tales (1932), p. 169.)

It is one of the widespread European and American folk beliefs not only that the Devil plays the violin, flute and other instruments, but that he is quite willing to teach them, and that his pupils all become very highly skilled. Among American Negroes the Devil is believed to give mastery in banjo, violin, and guitar, usually with the idea implied or clearly expressed that the pupil loses his soul. (See H. M. Hyatt, Folk-Lore from Adams County, Illinois (New York, 1935), p. 457, No. 9073; Puckett, op.cit., pp. 553-54. See also Maryland versions in JAFI V (1892), 110, and JAFI XVIII, 78. Among the Galician Ukrainians it is believed that "mastery in any of the arts is attainable only with the help of the Devil...One who wishes to excel at playing the flute..." must go through a complicated process in which devils and angels contest for his soul. When the devils obtain it, the man becomes a master at the flute. (S. Koenig, "Magical Beliefs and Practices among the Galician Ukrainians," Folk-Lore XLVIII, 68-9.)

It has been pointed out by scholars that in many cultures the Christian Devil has replaced other mythical figures. C. Engel, Musical Myths and Facts, (London and New York, 1876), I, p. 202, repeats from

Grimm the story that the Norwegians believed a "Neck" called Fossegrim would teach "his enchanting harp-playing" to anyone who on a Thursday evening made the proper sacrifice. In Scotland it is believed that the fairies can bestow the gift of great skill in music. (J. G. Campbell, Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland (Glasgow, 1900), p. 22.) And a Banshee is said to have given a piper a hair which, placed on the reed of his chanter, made him excel his own family (all pipers) and become the greatest piper of all time. (J. MacDougall and G. Calder, Folk Tales and Fairy Lore in Gaelic and English (Edinburgh, 1910), pp. 174-79. See also J. G. Campbell, op.cit., pp. 140-41). In Ireland a "Púca" makes a piper the best in Ireland. (W. B. Yeats, Irish Fairy and Folk Tales (New York, n.d.) pp. 101-3).

It can be seen, therefore, that the idea of a musician who learns from or is given extraordinary musical skill by a supernatural being is well known in folklore. To have such stories retailed about Paganini is just another example of the tendency for such stories to cluster around a central hero.

3. Tartini And The Devil's Sonata

"Tartini went to sleep one night and thought he woke up. Anyway, the Devil was sitting on the footboard of his bed and had gotten his violin out of his case and played this piece upon it. It was so beautiful, he was so filled with it when he woke up, that he wrote down all he could remember and finished the rest himself. And it's now known as 'The Devil's Sonata'.

" -- I got the story when I was studying the piece from my teacher in Berlin."

There is another version of this story in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Despite the number of references to the Devil as a teacher of music, actual works learned from him are rarely given. In New Jersey, I have collected a legend that the well-known fiddle piece, "The Devil's Dream", was learned by a fiddler from the Devil himself. Actual pieces of music, supposedly secured from some supernatural being, are rather common in Western European folklore, and since, as I have mentioned, the accepted theory is that the Devil usually replaces an earlier supernatural figure, it seems justified to mention some of these pieces and stories. The fairies in particular have frequently granted the gift of certain songs. Dreams are occasionally mentioned as a source for these songs, but the person dreaming must have ventured on magic ground. "Carolan, the bard, slept out on a fairy rath. Fairy music came to him in his dreams, and on awakening he played the air from memory. Thus it was that he had power to madden men to mirth, or to set them weeping..." (Lady Wilde, Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland (Boston, 1888), p. 133.) And Lady Wilde tells us further that if a person sleeps on a fairy rath, fairy music "will enter into his soul, and when he awakes he may sing the air he

has heard in his dreams. In this way the bards learned their songs...." (op.cit., p. 152.)

As I have mentioned, songs are often learned from the supernatural. In Scotland many tunes are "said to have been originally learned from fairies." But also: "Some of the most celebrated pipers... are said to have learned their music from elves." (J. G. Campbell, op.cit., p. 18.) J. F. Campbell also gives the notation of some music which he says is the "music still sung of melody learned from a 'Bauchkan'". (J. F. Campbell, Popular Tales of the West Highlands (Paisley, 1890-92), II, 102-3.)

Engel tells us: "The Swedes relate wonderful stories respecting the marvellous harp-playing of a Neck called Strömkarl, who generally prefers the vicinity of water-mills and cascades for his abode. In olden times, before the introduction of Christianity into Sweden, the people used to sacrifice a black lamb to the Strömkarl, who, in return, taught them his charming music." (Engel, op.cit., p. 202). He also comments that in Sweden "it is said there are still to be found...minstrels who have learnt their music from the Necks" (op.cit., p. 202) and he actually gives the music of two tunes played by a family who supposedly learned the music "from a Neck" (op.cit., p. 203).

Also known is the tradition that pieces of music are sometimes learned accidentally by overhearing the fairies or elves. J. G. Campbell says "Peasants have heard and learned songs sung by fairies." (op.cit., p. 36). He also speaks of a "song learned by overhearing fairies." (op.cit., p. 138) There was a man who overheard and learned the fairy queen's song. (MacDougall and Calder, op.cit., p. 139) In Wales too, magic music has been heard and learned by people, and we are told "the tunes they play are known." (H. Trevelyan, Folk-Lore and Folk-Stories of Wales (London, 1909), p. 140. The pieces are given by name.) And coming back to fiddling: In Armagh, Ireland, a fiddler coming home from a wake fiddled a fairy jig with the fairies till he learned the tune. The tune is still a big favorite at dances. (T. G. F. Paterson, Country Cracks (Dundalk, 1939), p. 23.)

There is, however, considerable danger in intermeddling with fairy music. There is the well-known story, or rather cante-fable, of the hunchback who loses his hump when he overhears and adds to the fairies' song; his fellow hunchback tries to improve on the song, and for his pains is given an additional hunch. We are fortunate that T. C. Croker is able to give us the actual music in his Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland, from which Engel has copied it. A story from Lady Wilde shows us that the consequence can be even more serious. A piper learned a tune one evening from hearing fairy pipes. He was warned that he could only play it publicly three times. He won several piping contests by playing it, and in order to win a fourth one, played the tune a fourth time — and dropped dead (op.cit., p. 105.)

Station No. 18, ATC, APO 462
c/o PM, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Herbert Halpert

ANNUAL MEETING

The Sixth Annual Meeting of the Hoosier Folklore Society was held at 2:00 P. M. on Thursday, July 1, 1943, in the Indiana University Union, at Bloomington, Indiana. Despite tire rationing and war work, about twenty-five members were present. Lt. Herbert Halpert presided. There was a short business meeting and a brief report from the editor before the election of officers for 1943-44. The new officers are listed on the inside back cover.

The following papers were presented:

Greetings

Stith Thompson
Professor of English and Folklore, Indiana University

Some Siamese Folklore

David H. Dickason
Dept. of English, Indiana University

Publications of the American Folklore Society

Erminie W. Voegelin
Editor, Journal of American Folklore

Some Recent Work on the Folktale

Stith Thompson

A Folklore Collector in the Army

2nd Lt. Herbert Halpert, Air Corps
Editor, Hoosier Folklore Bulletin

In the evening members and their friends were guests at an informal gathering in the home of Professor and Mrs. Stith Thompson, and listened to folksong records.

NOTES

(Our readers are again reminded that this section was started for folklore items too brief for treatment in articles and for questions about folklore. The success of this department depends on the activity of its contributors.)

SOME INDIANA YARNS

These might be of some interest to your readers. I enclose a description of the incidents as I can recall the same. If you use these, I believe it would be advisable to leave out the names as their families are still living.

1. Overtaking the Wheels

About 1870, the first buggy with the hind wheels higher than the front wheels was delivered to a doctor in the southern part of Indiana. The entire neighborhood gathered around the doctor the next day when he hitched his favorite horse to the new buggy to make a call. They were expecting the hind wheels to run over the front ones when he

started down hill.

— The incident was told me by Ab Manford about the year 1892. He said that the buggy was owned by a doctor living in Switzerland County. The name of the doctor I do not recall.

2. Recognizing The Whistle

This story was told me by Jesse Addison about the year 1890.

A man living near Arlington, Indiana, heard the whistle of a train. He said: "Here comes a train. It's either a freight or a passenger, one or the other. I can tell by the whistle."

3. Are You Going Now?

This incident was told me about the year 1890 by Mrs. J. W. VanOsdol, regarding a young man, perhaps thirty years of age, who lived in the vicinity of Bennington in Switzerland County, Indiana.

Neighbors called one evening on his family. The callers got up to leave and said, "Well, we must be going!" Then they talked for some time, then said repeatedly: "We must be going; we must be going." The young man said: "Are you going now, or are you going to wait and go now?"

4. The Convivial Snake

Dallas Hardwick, Clerk of the Rush Circuit Court of Rushville, Indiana, recites this fish story.

He was fishing along Flatrock recently with no success. He walked back in the grass looking for grasshoppers for bait and he saw a snake that did not seem to be feeling very well. He put a few drops of whiskey on his head and it seemed to revive the snake. He went back to his fishing and a few minutes later something tapped him on the back of the neck and it was this snake wanting another drink.

Rushville, Indiana

A. L. Gary

(In the first number of this Bulletin we mentioned that stories of foolish misunderstandings or foolish behavior are often foisted upon some individual in the community. Mr. Gary's second and third yarns are good examples of this. Frequently a whole area is given, quite arbitrarily, the reputation of being full of fools or "noodles", as in the first yarn. The difference in size between the front and rear wheels of certain wagons seems to have struck the popular imagination. I recall tales based on this difference in C. E. Brown's stories of Bluenose Brainerd, and in J. C. Harris' Uncle Remus and His Friends. For a parallel and other references to the fourth tale, see this Bulletin, I,

17-18. A story of a frog with a taste for spirits is given in R. M. Dorson's delightful article "Jonathan Draws the Long Bow," New England Quarterly, XVI (1943), 263-64. -- The Editor.)

RHYME

My mother, Mrs. Ida L. Maitlen, recalls the following gem, which she learned from Louisa Manning from near Economy. Mrs. Manning is now Mrs. D. L. Proctor of Lexington, Kentucky.

I am a little curly head,
My father is a preacher;
I like to go to Sunday School
Because I love my teacher!

Arsenal Technical Schools
Indianapolis, Indiana

Irene A. McLean

WISCONSIN VERSIONS OF "SCISSORS!"

In June of this year Mr. Charles E. Brown sent the editor the following interesting letter:

Our University summer session (fifteen weeks) is beginning. We are preparing to hold again our Tuesday evening sunset folklore meetings on the University Memorial Union lake front terrace. These will continue for five or more weeks. They have been very popular student and faculty gatherings for a number of years. I and a number of other members and friends of our Wisconsin Folklore Society will be the speakers at these meetings.

I am collecting some new folktale and folksong material as opportunity offers. You may be interested to learn that Mrs. Brown has collected in this region a version of the "Scissors story" at Madison in 1937. She is housecleaning just now so that her folklore files are not readily available.

1a. The Obstinate Wife

A man and his wife got into a discussion concerning the name and purpose of a certain implement. He declared it to be a tongs and she was very positive that it was a scissors. After a long argument he became angry and pushed her into the millpond. He ducked her under the water a number of times but she would not give in and held her arm and hand above the water making the scissors sign with her fingers. Even after she has been drowned it seems that this very obstinate woman would still have her way -- the water in the race flowed backward.

1b. The Obstinate Wife

The version which I obtained from L. N. Skavlem at Carcajou farm, Lake Koshkonong, in 1941, was told to him by a Norwegian relative. It differs from the other only in the detail that the man strangled his wife and buried her. Later he found her hand protruding from the grave, two of the fingers being spread apart in the "scissors" sign. He knew that her spirit still held to her side of the quarrel and he hanged himself.

Madison, Wisconsin

Charles Edward Brown
Director, Wisconsin Folklore Society

(Mr. Brown refers to an article by H. Halpert, "Folktale and 'Wellerism' - A Note," SFQ VII (1943), 75-76, which contains versions of this folktale from Indiana and Wisconsin-New York, as well as references to other parallels.)

TWO TALES FROM BATESVILLE, INDIANA

These two Indiana tales, and the comment on the milieu from which they come, were told me this past fall by 1st Lt. Alvin W. Meyers, who is serving with me in Canada at the same air base. The first is a recognized European folktale; the second an example of the "noodle" tale.

"Batesville is in the southeast corner of Indiana, about thirty-five miles north of the Ohio River, sixty-five miles southeast of Indianapolis. Everybody in town, practically, came from Germany. We're the third generation, some of them fourth. All the old people still read German; speak it, too. A lot of the funerals for the oldtimers are preached in German. Down there you're either a German or a Yankee. You talk about patriotic people — when the boys were registered for the draft, they had the band out; it was a big occasion. In the last war it was the same thing. Decoration Day — that's a big day: bands out, school kids march, legionaires march.

1. Eating Before Working

"This is one my grandmother told to me in Batesville. I was maybe six, seven. It's a story that her mother told her when she was a child. It used to be told in Germany —Prussia."

A tramp came to the door and asked if there was any work he could do to earn a meal. So the lady said there was plenty of work and he could start right away cutting wood and cleaning up the back yard. He said he was hungry and asked if he could have breakfast first. So she fixed him breakfast. He wiped off his mouth and then said that if she would fix him dinner, he wouldn't have to stop for a meal and he could work right straight through. So she fixed him dinner. After he was through eating dinner he said if she would just fix him supper he could work right straight through and wouldn't have to stop for supper.

So she fixed him supper, and after he had eaten supper he got up from the table and said that he was sorry but it was a practice in their family from a long time back that they never worked after supper. So he put on his hat and coat and left.

(This is a form of Type 1561. For references to this Type, see this Bulletin, I, 27, which also has a different version of the tale.)

2. Oiling Shoes

"Our tenant out there on the farm told this to me. Elvin Stirn is his name. He's from Buena Vista, Indiana. On the farm we were discussing shoes and their wearing qualities and he brought that up. He said 'Just like the story' -- and then told the following story."

One fellow was tellin' another that if he would oil his shoes when he got them he would find they'd last longer. So the next time he got a pair of shoes he decided to try out the idea. He oiled one shoe and the other one he left as it was. About six months later he met the first fellow again and told him: "Say, that's a good idea, oiling shoes. It works all right." Said "I got a new pair of shoes, oiled one, and left the other one go." Said "And the one that I oiled wore fifteen minutes longer than the other one."

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Herbert Halpert

JUMPING ROPE JINGLES FROM BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

These jumping rope rhymes were collected from the children at the University School, Bloomington, Indiana.

1.

I went up town
To see Mrs. Brown.
She gave me a nickel,
To buy a pickle.
The pickle was sour,
She gave me a flower.
The flower was red,
She gave me a thread.
The thread was thin,
She gave me a pin.
The pin was sharp,
She gave me a harp,
And on this harp I played--
I love coffee, I love tea,
How many boys are stuck on me?
One, two, three, four, etc.

2.

Fudge, fudge,
Call the judge
Mrs. Brown's got
A new born baby.
It isn't a girl,
It isn't a boy,
It's just a fair young laddie.
Wrap it up in tissue paper,
Send it down the elevator,
One floor, miss,
Two floor, miss,
Three floor, miss,
Four floor, miss,
Five floor, miss,
Six floor, miss--
Kick it out the elevator door,

3.

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Turn around;
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Touch the ground;
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Go upstairs;
Teddy bear, Teddy Bear,
Say your prayers.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Do a back bend;
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
That's the end. (Child
jumps out.)

4.

Last night,
The night before,
Nickel and pickle
Came knocking at my door.
I went downstairs
To let them in,
They hit me over the head
With a rolling pin.
I went upstairs
To get my gun;
You ought to see the nickel
and pickle run.
1, 2, 3, 4, etc. (until
child misses.)

Bloomington, Indiana

5.

Spanish dancer do the splits,
Spanish dancer turn around,
Spanish dancer leave this town.
(Child jumps out.)

6.

Johnny broke a milk bottle
And blamed it on to me.
I told Ma,
Ma told Pa,
Johnny go a lickin'
So ha! ha! ha!
How many lickin's did he receive?
1, 2, 3, 4, etc. (until child
misses.)

7.

Down in the valley
Where the green grass grows,
There sat (a girl's name)
As sweet as a rose.
She sang, she sang,
She sang so sweet,
Along came (a boy's name)
And kissed her on the cheek.
How many kisses did she receive?
1, 2, 3, 4, etc. (until child
Misses.)

Angela Mensing

(The rhymes children use for games like jumping rope and bouncing ball, their taunts, gags, and retorts — all form a lively verbal body of folklore that is readily accessible to many people. When collecting these items, make careful note of just how these rhymes are used, e.g., in No. 2 of Miss Mensing's collection on the word "miss" it is probable that the child jumping intentionally "makes a miss" by straddling the rope.—The Editor.)

MORE ABOUT THE "LITTLE MORON"

In the last issue of the Bulletin, II, 17-18, Mr. Ernest W. Baughman, now president of the Hoosier Folklore Society, gave us a group of stories and gags about that recently popular favorite, the "little moron." This past summer I read a story which quoted a number of "Little Moron" jokes in an issue of Esquire, but failed to note the title and

date. As with all humor, it is hard to tell the age, except for those based on modern inventions or slang. Many a joke that flourished with Joe Miller was only refurbished from the Elizabethan jest books, and with a modern turn still serves in the present day anthologies of humor. A variant of Mr. Baughman's thirteenth story is found in Alfred Price's Rail Life (Toronto, 1925); others are in B. A. Cerf's The Pocket Book of War Humor (New York, 1943). Many are only newly disguised versions of jokes which amused or bored our ancestors. This selection of "little moron" stories is taken from mimeographed and typewritten sheets given to me in Canada by several American soldiers who compiled them for the amusement of their friends. The original sheets contain over a hundred of these "stories" -- including a few vulgar ones.

1. Two morons joined the cavalry and got horses exactly the same and couldn't tell them apart; so one said he would cut the mane off his. That was O.K. till it grew back in. So then the other said he would cut the tail off his, and that was O.K. till it grew back in. They decided to measure them by hands then, and the black one was two hands higher than the white one.
2. Three little morons were sleeping in a bed. It was kind of crowded so one little moron put his pillow on the floor and slept there. The other one leaned over and said, "You might as well come back in; it's not crowded now."
3. The little moron's feet were hanging out the end of the bed. The moon went by his window and asked him why he didn't cover them up. He said, "What, put those cold things in bed with me?"
4. The little moron wrote himself a letter and when asked what it said, replied, "I don't know; I won't get it until tomorrow."
5. The little moron told his mother he was glad she had named him Willy 'cause all the kids at school called him that.
6. The little moron was waiting for a 'phone call and couldn't wait any longer; so he took the receiver off the hook and left a note.
7. The little moron lost his watch on a hill, but wouldn't go back for it. He knew it would run down.
8. He wrapped his watch in cellophane to keep the ticks out of his pocket.
9. The little moron wrote letters to his girl very slowly. He said she couldn't read very fast.
10. He went to a show and was asked whether he wanted to sit up in the balcony or on the main floor. He said, "What's playing upstairs?"
11. And one killed his parents so he could go to the Orphans' Picnic.

HOOSIER FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Officers, 1943-44

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The Hoosier Folklore Bulletin is issued by the Society. The Hoosier Folklore Society is affiliated with the American Folklore Society.

Joint membership in the Hoosier Folklore Society and the American Folklore Society is available at a special rate of Four dollars a year to Indiana residents and to Indiana Schools, and libraries. Members receive the Hoosier Folklore Bulletin, The Journal of American Folklore, and Memoirs of the American Folklore Society as issued.

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All memberships are by the calendar year. Make money order or checks payable to the Hoosier Folklore Society and mail to the Treasurer of the Society.

Notice to Members

Membership dues for 1944 should be mailed promptly to Mrs. Cecelia H. Hendricks, Treasurer, Hoosier Folklore Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Members are urged to try to secure new members for the Society. Only with an increase in the funds made available in this way can we hope to enlarge the size and scope of the Bulletin.